

S-415
Boxwood Garden
Princess Anne
private

c. 1850 and earlier

Long-standing traditions in Princess Anne have credited General George Handy with the planting of the well-known boxwood garden that has distinguished the center of town for the past century and a half. It is no doubt that George Handy influenced the appearance of the garden during his ownership, however, a clause in the 1820 deed transferring the property from Elizabeth Handy to her son, George, suggests Elizabeth may have started some kind of ornamental garden during the early nineteenth century. Elizabeth Handy stipulated that, "...he the said George Handy will not erect on the said Lot and piece of ground any house or building during the lifetime of the said Elizabeth Handy or within the term of five years after her decease..." It seems reasonable to suspect from this protective clause that Elizabeth Handy was guarding more than an unimproved lot and that she had created something on this property that she cherished. In 1820 she not only sold this half-acre lot to her son, but since her husband, Colonel Handy, had died that year she sold the main house as well. Three years later she purchased a house that Sarah Martin Done had erected across the street from her son, thereby maintaining residence close to her family and the property she loved. Elizabeth Handy died in 1837, and George continued to maintain the garden north of his house until his death in 1856. To his wife, Mary Ellen, General George Handy left, "...House and lot where he resides with adjacent lot or orchard or ornamental garden."

The garden remained under the care of Mary Ellen Handy until the late years of the nineteenth century when she transferred ownership of the lot to her daughter, Elizabeth Handy Gale, in 1893. Around 1910, Elizabeth Gale financed the construction of the two-story frame house that stands at the east end of the lot

bordering Beechwood Street. Three years before her death, Elizabeth Gale sold the property to Alfred P. Dennis. The garden remains under the ownership of the sons of Alfred P. Dennis, and then Mary Value Dennis Clark held title to the property between 1947 and 1950. The property was sold finally from the Handy/Gale/Dennis family to John B. and Helen W. Roberts in 1950.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. S-415

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic BOXWOOD GARDEN

and/or common

2. Location

street & number SE corner of Washington St. and Somerset Ave. ___ not for publication

city, town Princess Anne ___ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Somerset

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture
___ building(s)	___ private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	___ commercial
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment
___ object	___ in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	___ government
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	___ no	___ military
			___ museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			___ private residence
			___ religious
			___ scientific
			___ transportation
			___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mrs. William B. Morsell

street & number Washington Street telephone no.:

city, town Princess Anne state and zip code Maryland 21853

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Somerset County Courthouse folio

city, town Princess Anne state MD 21853

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. S-415

Condition

☐ excellent

☒ good

☐ fair

☐ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered

☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date of move

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

8. Significance

Survey No. S-415

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1853 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. S-415

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Touart Architectural Historian

organization Somerset County Historical Trust date 2/10/88

street & number telephone

city or town Princess Anne state MD 21853

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

S-415
Boxwood Gardens
Princess Anne, Maryland Quadrangle
1972





BOXWOOD GARDEN, PLANTED 1853, PRINCESS ANNE, MD.

S-415

Boxwood Gardens

Princess Anne, Somerset Co., MD

Documentary photograph, c. 1930

Collection of Mrs. William Morsell

Copied 2/88
